

Morning Goodbyes by evendanstevens

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Genre: Accidental Relationship Reveal, Caught, F/M, One Shot, breakfast at the byers, oh well, pure fluff, this is so stupid

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Characters: Eleven (Stranger Things), Jane Hopper, Jim "Chief" Hopper, Jonathan Byers, Joyce Byers, Will Byers

Relationships: Joyce Byers & Jim "Chief" Hopper, Joyce Byers/Jim "Chief" Hopper

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Summary:

in which Joyce and Hopper are terrible at keeping secrets.

Morning Goodbyes

Author's Note:

I watched a lot of Friends this weekend when Chandler and Monica are trying to hide their relationship and was once again inspired. Please enjoy this short fluff piece I wrote way too quickly so apologies it's not that well written, I am very tired oops

Friday morning breakfast with the Byers had become somewhat of a tradition with the Hoppers. Friday was when Joyce needed to leave earlier to go to work and Jonathan would leave earlier to get to school to work on his college portfolio. So Hopper had offered to take Will to school on Friday mornings. Jane would tag along with him and hide in the back of the car when they dropped him off. She liked to take any opportunity to get out of the house and watch the town go by, knowing that soon enough she would be walking those streets freely to her hearts content. And Joyce had told Hopper in secret that Will loved showing up to school in Hopper's police Blazer, she liked to think it made him feel safer, even a little intimidating to the other kids. Hopper had smiled at that, happy to make the kid feel even just a little bit empowered.

And he also couldn't complain about the breakfast food. Jonathan always cooked up a killer meal before ducking out, eggs, bacon, and now that Jane was joining them, eggos. Hopper couldn't help but smile at Jane's face, constantly lit up over the course of the meal as the five of them sat down together. Not that her and Hopper didn't have a nice morning routine of music and breakfast, but it was nice for her to feel like she had a proper family. He knew fine well that she saw Joyce as a mother figure, and it wasn't hard for her to do so considering how much Joyce fussed over her. Always there for Jane whenever she needed more female company, or needed someone to talk to about things she wasn't comfortable discussing with her adoptive father. And Will and Jonathan had practically accepted her as their sister. Will and Jane were practically inseparable when they were together, and Jonathan had introduced her to the same music

and books he had introduced to Will. And Hopper could see it in the way Jonathan was around her, that he was just as fiercely protective of her as he was Will.

It was this family dynamic, this utterly welcoming presence the boys had provided Jane, that made Hopper feel slightly guilty about the secret he was harbouring from them. That secret being that he and Joyce were sneaking around like total teenagers behind their backs. Said sneaking around taking place as recently as the night before.

Hopper had crept into the house after his night shift at work. Jane knew he worked late Thursday and had assured him she was more than capable of making her own dinner and getting herself to bed, even so much as telling him she enjoyed the alone time. So he had quietly tiptoed through the house into Joyce's room a little after one, long after the boys had gone to sleep. She had been sleeping when he entered, and Hopper would have been more than happy to leave her like that. He would have been content just crawling into bed and holding her as she did so for a little while, her presence and feel of her dreaming body in his arms enough to make him smile.

But when she had stirred awake and found him in her bed, that had not been the case. Twice in the course of a couple of hours they had been at it like rabbits, trying desperately to keep the noise down before Hopper sneaked out not long before dawn.

The only set back of their *busy* evening, was now they were both almost falling head first into their breakfasts in exhaustion. Hopper had chuckled quietly to himself when he'd looked up at her over the table and found that she had dozed off for a moment, her chin resting on her chest. Before anyone could notice, he had gently kicked her under the table and she shot up suddenly. Realising what had happened she had looked across at him and shared with him a knowing smile as a blush rushed to her cheeks. He had felt an overwhelming urge then to stand up, throw her over his shoulder and retire to her bedroom to repeat last night's antics. But alas, there were children present and jobs to go to.

So it was no surprise to Jim when Joyce got up to leave, he noticed she had forgotten her bag. He had picked it up from the couch and walked through to the hallway. Jonathan was there putting on his

jacket to leave with her and Jane and Will had come through to wave them off for the day. When Hopper appeared round the corner with her bag, the tired yawn she let out suddenly turned into a thankful smile that completely enamoured him. The woman's smile coursed through him with an indescribable warmth that made him unable to think or focus on anything else other than the stunning vision in front of him.

"Don't forget this," he held the bag up as he made his way over to her, hovering over her.

She sighed with relief as he approached her and rolled her eyes at herself. "Oh god, I am such an idiot," she held a hand over her heart as she let out a self-deprecating laugh.

"Hey, you're no idiot," he murmured down to her as he took the strap of her bag and put it over her shoulder for her as she muttered a 'thank you'. Once the bag was over her shoulder, his hand did not move from her back, looped around the strap just over her shoulder blade. He found his fingers instinctively stroking the rigid spot of her back in a soothing manner, the same way she did when she lay atop of him after they finished their more adult activities. "Have a good day at work," he smirked down at her in a way Joyce found intoxicating.

It was then she found herself quickly pressing her lips against his in a kiss that was far too long to be considered chaste. He had naturally kissed her back, his free hand intuitively going to her waist. Any opportunity to kiss her, he treasured. When she pulled away she rested her forehead against his and murmured a 'you too' before putting her heels back on the ground, retreating to her tiny height.

And then someone let out a little cough and both their eyes widened in horror. In their sleepy state of happiness after the night before, they had completely forgotten they actually had an audience. Hopper turned to the kids who were completely frozen, their jaws on the floor as their eyes darted between the two. Hopper then turned to Joyce for a little help with the situation, but she was equally as shocked as the kids as a hand came up to her mouth and her entire face was aflame. She opened her mouth to speak, but all that came out was a mixture of high pitched, choked noises before she

completely gave up and clamped her mouth shut again.

She didn't even look at Hopper before completely panicking and practically running out the door without a word.

Hopper cursed her internally before turning back to the kids. Will was clearly concealing a laugh, Jane's face was scrunched up in utter confusion, and Jonathan was crossing his arms and raising an accusing eyebrow at Hopper.

"Look, uh," he struggled to find the words to explain. "I, um--"

"Is Joyce your girlfriend?" Jane piped up, giving Hopper an adorably bewildered look. But despite the adorableness of her expression, Hopper had no idea what to say. Girlfriend sounded far too immature for people their age but the seriousness of the word was all the same. Up until now, Joyce and Hopper had been having too much fun they hadn't really thought about what they were. Well, that was a lie. Hopper thought about it most nights before he fell asleep, he thought about it every time they lay together, fingers tracing each other's bare skin in a post-coital daze. But nevertheless they didn't discuss it.

"Any of you guys mention this to anyone, you're grounded," was the best response Hopper could come up with as he raised a threatening finger to the three of them. There was a silence between them before Will spoke.

"Sure thing, Dad."

And then Will and Jonathan were laughing. Jane still looked completely dumbfounded and was now staring blankly at the wall trying to piece together everything that had just transpired. Hopper sighed to himself and ran a hand down his face in frustration.

He was screwed.